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SEAL AND FLAG OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

1665-1915

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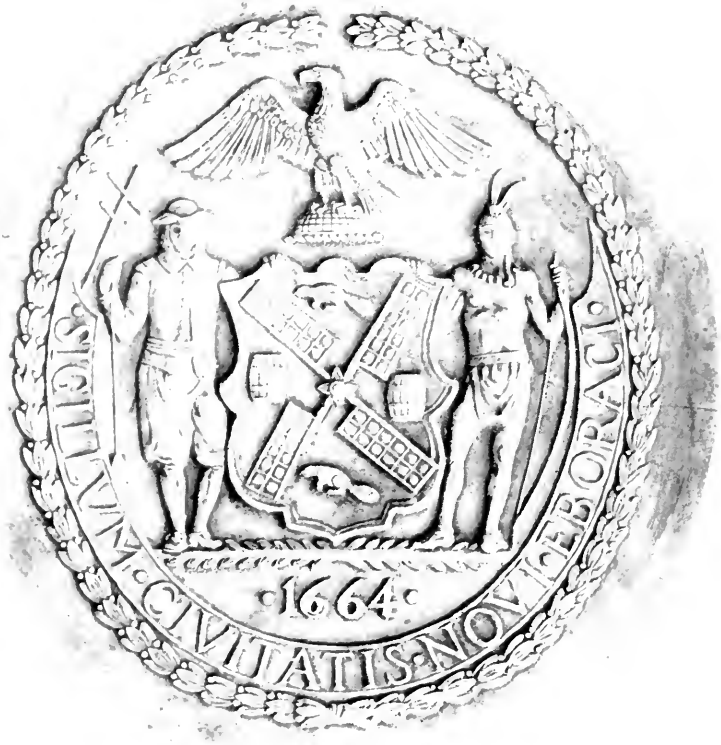

Seal of The City of New York

1915

SEAL AND FLAG

OF THE

CITY OF NEW YORK

AUTHORIZED BY THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE MAYOR TO COMMEMORATE THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INSTALLATION OF THE FIRST MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK ON JUNE 24, 1665, AND THE ADOPTION OF THE OFFICIAL CITY FLAG ON JUNE 24, 1915

EDITED BY

JOHN B. PINE, L.H.D.

FROM

THE C. H. KOSTER CO.

21 PARK PLACE, NEW YORK

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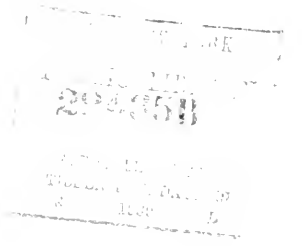
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

NEW YORK LONDON

The Knickerbocker Press

1915



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The Knickerbocker Press, New York

PREFACE

THE flag which has recently been adopted by The City of New York as its official emblem, combining the colors of the United Netherlands, under which the city was settled, with the design of the municipal seal, under which English authority replaced the Dutch, tells the story of the origin and early history of the city. Founded by the Dutch in 1626, as "New Amsterdam," it was renamed "New York" in 1664, and a year later, on June 24, 1665, the municipal government was formally transferred to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of The City of New York, as successors in office of the Burgomasters and Schepens of the City of New Amsterdam.

To commemorate the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of this event and to recall the associations which give historical significance to the corporate seal (now happily restored to its original

38X1074

design), and to the flag of orange, white and blue, under which civil government was established on the Island of Manhattan, the Anniversary Committee appointed by the Mayor have authorized the publication of this volume.

J. B. P.

June 24, 1915.

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SEAL AND FLAG OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

I

THE TRANSITION FROM DUTCH TO ENGLISH GOVERNMENT IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

By Victor Hugo Paltsits
Former State Historian of New York

In so far as historical records inform us, Henry Hudson and his motley crew were the first Europeans who, on September 12, 1609, looked upon the beautiful island of Manhattan, the mother of the greater city of New York. This discovery by the venturesome commander of the ship "de Halve Maen" (Half Moon) was accidental. Hudson's contract required him to search "for a passage by the North, around by the North

side of Nova Zembla" and to "continue thus along that parallel" until he should "be able to sail Southward to the latitude of sixty degrees." He was enjoined from going along any other routes or passages than these and actually endeavored to carry out his commission. Meeting with dangerous icebergs and subjected to extreme suffering from fogs and snow-storms in the region of the North Cape of Norway, dissensions arose among his crew which determined him, "contrary to his instructions," to change his operations to America, either in forty degrees north latitude or to search for a northwest passage through Davis Strait.

Hudson's voyage was followed in a desultory manner by Dutch skippers from 1610 to 1614, and after the latter year several ships came over under exclusive privileges granted to the United New Netherland Company, a trading corporation, whose privileges expired in 1618. A few detached voyages were made subsequently. In 1621, the newly-organized Dutch West India Company was granted a monopoly in supersession of all others in America. Its objects were the weakening of Spain by war and by commercial repression. It

was this Company which sent out the first colonists, who settled in 1624 where the city of Albany now stands. Other settlers went to the same place in 1625. On May 4, 1626, Peter Minuit arrived in New Netherland—as the whole country was called; began the first settlement of Manhattan Island at its southern extremity, and laid the foundations of New Amsterdam. During the summer of this year Director-General Minuit effected the purchase of Manhattan Island from the Indians by giving them trinkets valued at sixty guilders, or twenty-four dollars. Of course, Minuit had brought over with him a number of colonists and servants of the West India Company. He soon began to concentrate in the new settlement men, women, and children from the prior posts. In 1628, the population of Manhattan consisted of only two hundred and seventy souls. Now, the West India Company had reserved to itself the complete jurisdiction of Manhattan Island. Other parts of the Dutch province could be granted to patroons or large land owners; but not so with respect to Manhattan Island. The Company reserved its rights there inviolably.

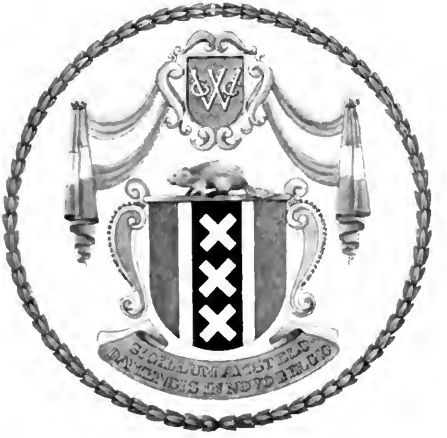
This we know from the Company's "Charter of Freedoms and Exemptions," of June 7, 1629. That charter was designed to encourage colonization, and the peopling of the island of Manhattan was its principal concern. The island was made the staple port of all products and wares. This meant that the trading ships were to unload at New Amsterdam or pay certain duties there for the benefit of the Company.

For more than a quarter of a century there was nothing like a corporate government in the settlement of New Amsterdam. Its laws were made and administered by a Director-General and Council, with the consent of the Directors at Amsterdam, who together were supreme in everything affecting the life and business of the people. This autocratic system began to annoy the commonalty and, in 1649, the resentment took form in a remonstrance to the States General of the Netherlands, in which the grievances of the people were set forth at length. No one who has read the records of the time can doubt the justification of the complaints of the people of New Netherland. The government was rigorous and at times

PLATE I

Arms of the City of Amsterdam

1578



Seal of the City of New Amsterdam

1654

contemptible. The States General had to consider this firm protest, supported as it was by strong men and the sympathy of the inhabitants, yet there was a good deal of backing and filling in its deliberations. On April 11, 1650, a report was made by a committee of the States General, entitled, a "Provisional Order respecting the Government, Preservation and Peopling of New Netherland," which was designed to meet the complaint of the commonalty by a removal of the causes that had so greatly disturbed the conduct of affairs in the province oversea. Among other things, it recommended that there be granted "within the city of New Amsterdam a municipal government, consisting of one Sheriff (*schout*), two Burgomasters and five Schepens," and that the Board of Nine Men, a limited representative body, should, in the meantime, "continue three years longer and have jurisdiction over small causes arising between Man and Man, to adjudicate definitely on suits not exceeding the sum of fifty guilders [$20] and on higher amounts under privilege of appeal." This was the foundation on which the municipal concessions of 1653 were built.

The year 1653 was the banner year of New Amsterdam during the Dutch occupancy. It has already been observed that hitherto its government was coördinate with that of the province. On April 4, 1652, the Directors of the Amsterdam Chamber of the West India Company informed Director-General Peter Stuyvesant and his Council that a municipal form of government had been granted to New Amsterdam. It took some time for this communication to arrive from Holland and its immediate execution was delayed. On February 2, 1653, Stuyvesant and the council proclaimed the form of municipal government by a set of instructions. Strictly speaking, this instrument was not a charter; but it was embryonic of charter rights. It derived its authority from "the Directors of the Chartered West India Company of the Chamber of Amsterdam, Lords and Patroons" of New Netherland. It originated "a bench of justice" in New Amsterdam, "to be framed, as far as possible and as the situation of the country" permitted, "after the laudable customs of the city of Amsterdam, which gave her name to this first commenced town"; but all sentences in this in-

ferior city court were to "remain revocable and appealable to the director-general and council, in order to be definitely determined by them." It named a bench of two burgomasters and five schepens who now and hereafter were to be sworn in on the 2d of February (Candlemas Day) of each year, save that when that day fell on a Sunday an alteration was to be made. A certain number of the officials were to be changed yearly and others put in their places. This was done so that those who continued in office could inform the new members of the former transactions of the court. The jurisdiction of the court was limited to the regions lying between the North and East Rivers, south of the Fresh Water, which was an irregular stream south of Canal Street. The instructions conferred upon the burgomasters absolute authority to nominate administrative officials, but subject to election and confirmation by the Director-General. The office of *schout* or prosecutor was filled by the provincial fiscal and not till 1660 did the city secure a grant of an independent *schout.*

During the entire Dutch régime after 1653, the

city fathers were engaged in periodical conflict with the provincial government and in registering protests to the Directors at Amsterdam against the limitations of their authority and the rights of the commonalty. These protests, whilst arousing resentment in Stuyvesant and rejoinders from the Directors at Amsterdam, helped to wrest from both concessions that were welcomed by the city.

On March 12/22, 1664,[1] King Charles II. granted to his brother James, the Duke of York, a part of Maine, all of Long Island, Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket,

> "and all the land from the west side of Connectecutte River to the East side of De la Ware Bay," giving to him "his heires and Assignes and to all and every such Governor or Governors

[1] Double dates are given in the months of the years 1664 and 1665 in order to avoid confusion and error. The English dated their records according to the Julian calendar, which had its origin in the time of Julius Cæsar, and is known as "old style," to distinguish it from the Gregorian calendar, known as "new style," and which was a reform in the reckoning of time that was instituted in Roman Catholic countries or countries under their influence, in February, 1582. The Dutch had adopted the Gregorian system, whilst among the English it was not promulgated before September, 1752. In the seventeenth century therefore, a difference exists of ten days. Most of the Christian countries follow the Gregorian system, except Russia and Greece. The latest date is the modern equivalent.

or other Officers or Ministers as by our said Brother his heires or Assignes shall bee appointed to have power and Authority of Governement and Commaund in or over the Inhabitants of the said Territories or Islands that they and every one of them shall and lawfully may from tyme to tyme and att all tymes hereafter for ever for their severall defence and safety encounter expulse repell and resist by force of Armes as well by Sea as by land and all wayes and meanes whatsoever all such Person and Persons as without the special Lycence of our said deare Brother his heires or Assignes shall attempt to inhabite within the several Precincts and Lymitts of our said Territories and Islands."

This grandiloquent grant disregarded the rights of the Dutch over New Netherland, with whom England was then at peace, and showed disrespect for the charters of Massachusetts and Connecticut, as well as ignored grants that had been made to certain individuals in Maine and on Long Island.

Under the leadership of one John Scott, "the usurper," the English towns on Long Island revolted early in this year and "divers threats" were heard of ill designs against New Amsterdam.

A general provincial assembly or "landtdag" was held at New Amsterdam to debate the state of affairs and consider means of defense. While these things were transpiring, the Duke of York as Lord High Admiral of England, began to organize an expedition to put his patent in operation. A fleet of four war-ships was assembled under the command of Col. Richard Nicolls, who was appointed to be deputy governor of the Duke of York's territories. With Nicolls were associated as royal commissioners, Sir Robert Carr, Col. George Cartwright and Samuel Maverick, to secure the assistance of the New Englanders in the reduction of the Dutch of New Netherland. Information of the English designs was known in Boston as early as May 18/28 and was communicated to Stuyvesant by Captain Thomas Willett on June 28th/July 8th. The burgomasters and schepens at once resolved to put the city in a state of defense. On July 25th/August 4th, Stuyvesant wrote to the Directors at Amsterdam that, owing to constant rumors of an English invasion, his government was "very circumspect, anxious and watchful." He said:

"We keep the military force under our command as close together as possible, heighten the walls of our fort, strengthen it with gabions and make all arrangements for defense. It is not our least anxiety, that we have so little powder and lead on hand, there being only 2500 lbs in the magazine and besides that not over 500 lbs among the militia and inhabitants here and at Fort Orange [Albany], as we are informed. You can easily judge, that this supply will not last long, for it is not more than two pounds of powder for each man able to bear arms and then we have nothing left for our artillery, if we have to sustain an attack."

Reinforcements of ammunition and men were drawn upon from other places in the province. On August 18/28, the English squadron cast anchor at Nyack Bay, below the Narrows, between New Utrecht and Coney Island. This created a virtual blockade of the port and enabled the English to commit depredations on shipping and at Staten Island. Stuyvesant who had gone to Fort Orange was urged to return and reached New Amsterdam on August 15/25, and four days later despatched bearers to Col. Nicolls to "desire and entreate" him concerning the

"meaning of their approach and continuing in the Harbour . . . without giving any notice . . . or first acquainting us w^th^ their designe." This was of course merely the language of an evasive diplomacy. Nicolls replied on the following day by a peremptory summons, requiring "a Surrender of all such Forts, Townes, or places of strength," which were "now possessed by the Dutch," and expected an immediate answer at the hands of the English deputies who had conveyed his message. On August 22/September 1, Stuyvesant wrote to the Directors at Amsterdam a letter in which he told of the arrival of the English fleet, said that Long Island was lost, New Amsterdam was summoned to surrender, popular murmurs and disaffection existed, and the loss of the country was certain. Besides the depleted ammunition there was a scarcity of grain. The bakers of the city estimated that their united stock amounted to only 975 skepels. On August 26/September 5, Stuyvesant consented to treat with the invaders and on the same day Nicolls accepted the proposal for a treaty of surrender in order "to prevent the effusion of blood, and to improve the good of the

Inhabitants." The articles of surrender were arranged by the joint Dutch and English commissioners at Stuyvesant's "bouwery" or farmhouse at eight o'clock in the morning of August 27/September 6, and promised the inhabitants who wished to remain "liberty of their Consciences in Divine Worship and Church Discipline." The Dutch were also to "Enjoy their owne Customes, concerning their Inheritances." This secured their property rights. Article 16 provided, as follows:

> "All inferior civill Officers and Magistrates shall continue as now they are (if they please) till the Customary time of New Eleccon, and the new ones to be Chosen, by themselves, provided that such new Chosen Magistrates shall take the Oath of Allegiance to his Majesty of England, before they enter upon their Office."

On August 29/September 8, the fort and town were formally surrendered to Nicolls and on the same day the city was named New York. This name extended itself to the entire province, and Fort Orange was named Albany in honor of another of the titles of the proprietor.

On September 6/16, the burgomasters and

schepens decided to apprise the Directors of the West India Company at Amsterdam of what had transpired. It had all happened, they said, "through God's pleasure thus unexpectedly," on account of the Company's "neglect and forgetfulness" of its promises. On the same day we find the earliest recognition of the name New York in the records of the city court. Fort New Amsterdam was renamed Fort James, after the Duke of York. Perhaps the earliest use of this designation is found in a warrant of September 8/18. On October 18/28 the oath of allegiance was proclaimed by Governor Nicolls, namely, to be "a true subject to the king of Great Britain;" to be obedient to the king, to the Duke of York, and to such governors and officers as were appointed by such authority. Objections arose to the taking of this oath and during the squabble that ensued Nicolls "finally departed with his secretary from the meeting," and the meeting was adjourned. Nicolls sought by explanation to allay the fears of the Dutch. Two days later a general meeting was again assembled and the matter was settled amicably.

The burgomasters and schepens, having taken the oath, continued in office. Pieter Tonneman, the city *schout*, however, asked to be relieved from his post in order to return to Holland. He was succeeded by Allard Anthony on November 22/December 2, but continued to sit with the city court until November 29/December 9, when he communicated "in writing his retirement from the Bench."

On November 24/December 4, the city fathers approved a letter written by their president to the Duke of York, in which they promised obedience and said they deemed themselves fortunate that the Duke had provided them "with so gentle, wise and intelligent a gentleman" for governor as Col. Richard Nicolls, and that they were confident "that under the wings of this valiant gentleman" the city would "bloom and grow like the Cedar on Lebanon."

The members of the city court before the surrender were, Pieter Tonneman, *schout;* Paulus Leendertsen vander Grift and Cornelis Steenwyck, burgomasters; and Jacob Backer, Timotheus Gabry, Isaac Grevenraet, Nicolaes de Meyer and

Christoffel Hooghlant, schepens. By the sixteenth article of capitulation, they were continued in office, save that Tonneman resigned, as we have seen, and Hooghlant did not sit after July. That article stipulated that they should also thereafter name and elect their successors. Under the Dutch régime, they had been allowed only to nominate a double number, whilst final selection, election and confirmation were reserved by the director-general and council. On February 2, 1665 (old style), they proceeded according to the new agreement and "elected and confirmed" a new city court bench. This done, they submitted their action to Governor Nicolls, to learn "if he had any objection to these persons." He had not, and the board proclaimed the new bench to the commonalty of the city at the City Hall; whereupon the new members took the oath of allegiance to English authority. The city bench now consisted of Allard Anthony, continued as *schout;* Cornelis Steenwyck, continued and advanced to presiding burgomaster; Oloff Stevensen van Cortlandt, second burgomaster; Timotheus Gabry, president of the schepens, and Joannes

van Brugh, Joannes de Peyster, Jacob Kip and Jacques Cousseau, new schepens. They continued in office until the form of government was changed in June.

At a session of the *schout*, burgomasters and schepens on June 13/23, 1665, Governor Nicolls appeared in their midst and had the clerk of Matthias Nicolls, the provincial secretary, read the order signed by the governor on the previous day, for the "Revocacon of y^e^ Forme of Government of New Yorke," as follows:

"Upon mature deliberacon and advice, I have thought it necessary to Revoke and discharge, And by these p^r^sents in his Ma^ties^ name, do Revoke and discharge the Forme and Ceremony of Government, of this his Ma^ties^ Towne of New Yorke, under the name or Names, Style or Styles, of Scout [*sic*] Burgomasters and Schepens; As also, that for y^e^ future Administracon of Justice, by the Lawes Establish't in these the Territoryes of his Royall Highnesse, wherein the welfares of all the Inhabitants and the Preservacon of all their due Rights and Priviledges, Graunted by the Articles of this Towne upon Surrender under his Ma^ties^ obedience, are concluded; I do further declare, That by a Particular Commission, Such Persons shall be

Authorized to putt the Lawes in Execucon, in whose Abilityes, Prudence and good affection to his Ma^ties^ Service, and y^e^ Peace and happynesse of this Governm^t^, I have especiall reason to put confidence, which Persons so Constituted and appointed, shall bee knowne and Call'd by y^e^ Name and Style of Mayor, Aldermen and Sheriffe, according to the Custome of England in other his Ma^ties^ Corporacons."

On the same day, June 12/22, Governor Nicolls had appointed by commissions, for one year, Thomas Willett to be Mayor; Thomas Delavall, Oloff Stevensen van Cortlandt, Joannes van Brugh, Cornelis van Ruyven and John Laurence, as aldermen; and Allard Anthony, as sheriff,

"Giving and Granting, to them the said Mayor and Aldermen, or any foure of them, whereof the said Mayor or his Deputy, shall be alwayes one, and upon equall Division of voyces, to have alwayes the Casting and Desisive voyce, full Power and Authority, to Rule and Governe as well all the Inhabitants of this Corporacon, as any Strangers, according to the General Lawes of this Government, and such Peculiar Lawes as are, or shall bee thought convenient and necessary for the good and wellfare of this his Ma^ties^ Corporacon; As also, to appoint such

under Officers, as they shall judge necessary, for the Orderly execution of Justice; And I do hereby Strictly Charge & Command all Persons to obey and Execute, from Time to Time, all such Warrants, Orders and Constitutions, as shall bee made by the said Mayor and Aldermen, as they will Answer to the contrary at their utmost Perills."

It will be noticed that this body consisted of Englishmen and Dutchmen, of whom van Cortlandt and Captain Joannes Pietersen van Brugh, son-in-law of the well-known Anneke Jans, had been burgomasters, whilst van Ruyven had held high office in the Dutch provincial government, and Anthony, formerly *schout*, was continued in the new position of sheriff. On June 14/24, Governor Nicolls appeared in the city court, accompanied by Willett, the newly-appointed mayor, Delavall, van Brugh and van Ruyven, who took their places on the new bench. Burgomaster van Cortlandt, who had also been named as an alderman, arose and maintained that the abrogation of the old court system at this time was "directly contrary to the 16th Article made on the surrender" of the city, and which stated that "All Officers and Magistrates"

should continue as they were, if they were willing, "till the time of election," when, and not till then, "new ones" were "to be chosen by themselves." Nicolls replied, and correctly, too, that the article was "not infringed in the least, as at the election," in the preceding February, "other new ones were chosen by the retiring Magistrates," who had continued in office ever since. A considerable debate ensued; but Governor Nicolls was determined to proceed in conformity with his instructions from the Duke of York, namely, "to establish the government of this City conformable to the custom of England," which was done on this day. He declared he had "nothing to say against the service of those retiring nor against their demeanor;" he acknowledged as "good" what they had "heretofore officially resolved and concluded;" but avowed that he had "qualified some English for the office on purpose," so that litigants, "as well English as Dutch," might "be better aided on both sides," and in the interest of "the peace and quiet of the inhabitants." This done, Governor Nicolls "installed" the mayor, aldermen and sheriff, and administered the oath

to them. After the oath was taken and "the customary ringing of the bell three times," the new court was "proclaimed to the Commonalty" at the City Hall. In this manner the transition from Dutch to English government in the city of New York took place on June 14, 1665 (old style), which corresponds with June 24th, in new style, as we reckon now, and is the day we celebrate as the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of this significant event in the history of the metropolis of the western hemisphere.

II

HISTORY OF THE SEAL AND FLAG

By E. Hagaman Hall, L.H.D.

THE ARMS OF OLD AMSTERDAM

THE old city of Amsterdam in Holland, after which New Amsterdam was named, had a very ancient coat-of-arms, the principal design of which was incorporated in the seal of New Amsterdam and frequently appears in the ornamentation of the municipal buildings of the city.[1] The origin of its symbols is interesting. In the year 1296, when Amsterdam was only a fishing village protected by a castle, it was almost completely demolished as a punishment for participating in the killing of Count Floris of Holland. But "in the year 1342 she fell under the power of William, Count of Holland, who honored her with several

[1] The arms of New Netherland, New Amsterdam and New York are repeated many times on the new Municipal Building.

PLATE II

Seal of the Province of New Netherland

1623

Seal of the Province of New York

1669

prerogatives, and gave her new arms, to wit, gules, on a pale sable three crosses argent"[1]—that is to say, three white crosses upon a vertical black bar in the middle of a red field.

That the white saltire crosses in the arms of old and New Amsterdam were not conventionalized windmills, as is sometimes supposed, appears from the following quotation translated from the *Medalische Historie der Republyk van Holland*, by Peter Mortier, 1690:

> "Since William Count of Henegouwen and Holland, in order to rebuild in Holland the devastated City of Amsterdam, had given her many liberties in order to retrieve her fallen powers and furnish her everywhere with walls, gates and canals in greater degree than ever, he has made a present to the Amsterdammers of three crosses on the field of the City's arms—a sign that he has freed her of much misery and cross."[2]

The crest of the arms of Amsterdam, an imperial crown, was granted by Emperor Maximilian in

[1] *Histoire Métallique des XVII Provinces des Pays-Bas . . .* by Gerard van Loon, 1732, quoted in *The Civic Ancestry of New York City and State*, by Edward Seymour Wilde.

[2] Translation in Wilde's *Civic Ancestry*.

1481 (or 1488) in recognition of the services of Amsterdam in the reduction of Rotterdam and Woerden. The coat-of-arms of Amsterdam is shown in Plate I.

To recall a few of the many connections between Amsterdam and New Netherland it may be mentioned that Henry Hudson who discovered the Hudson River in 1609 was hired by the Amsterdam Chamber of the East India Co.; that the first charter for trading here was granted in 1614 to merchants of Amsterdam and Hoorn; that the ship which brought Peter Minuit and his company to Manhattan in 1626 to make a permanent settlement sailed from Amsterdam; and that the ship which carried to Amsterdam the news of the purchase of Manhattan Island from the Indians was called the *Arms of Amsterdam.*

SEAL OF NEW NETHERLAND

The first local governmental seal by which transactions in New Amsterdam were attested was the seal of New Netherland, for there was no city seal prior to 1654. This seal is interesting

because it supplies one of the devices used in the present city seal. It consists of a shield upon which, "in bend,"—to use an heraldic term meaning "diagonally,"—is represented a beaver, surrounded by what appears to be a string of wampum. The crest is a count's coronet between single stars, the province having the armorial rights of a countship. Around the shield is the legend *Sigillum Novi Belgii*, meaning "seal of New Belgium" (or New Netherland). The whole is surrounded by a wreath. Impressions of this seal may be seen at the New York Historical Society, and a drawing of it will be found in Plate II.

The Beaver, which is perpetuated in the present city seal, represents the chief commodity upon which the original commerce of New Netherland and New Amsterdam was founded. At that time, Holland competed with the other European nations in the fur-trade, the chief source of which was northern Europe. The discovery of a new source of supply, from which furs could be secured cheaply, was one of the principal inducements which led to commerce with New Netherland before and

after its permanent settlement. The beaver skin, like wampum, was also used in the Dutch and early English periods as money, a "beaver" in 1658 being reckoned as 16 guilders and a "half beaver" as 8 guilders. In 1680, according to the journal of the Labadists, Dankers and Sluyter, a beaver was reckoned at 5 guilders Holland money or 25 guilders in seawant (wampum).

An idea of the proportions which the trade in beaver skins attained in the first ten years of chartered trading may be gained from the fact that two ships returning to Holland in 1624 took 4,000 beaver and 700 otter skins which sold for 25,000 to 27,000 guilders. In 1625, 5,295 beavers and 463 otters returned to the importers 35,825 guilders.[1] On November 4, 1626, the ship *Arms of Amsterdam* arrived at Amsterdam with news of the purchase of Manhattan Island and the planting of New Amsterdam, and also carried 7,246 beaver, 853½ otter, 81 mink, 36 wild cat (lynx) and 34 rat skins.[2] De Laet's *Jaerlyck Verhael*, which varies the figures slightly, says that

[1] De Laet's *Jaerlyck Verhael*.

[2] Schaghen letter, facsimile and translation in Wilson's *Memorial History of New York*, I, 159–160.

7,258 beavers and 857 otters, etc., received in 1626 sold for 45,050 guilders. By 1671, the province of New York furnished "full 80,000 beavers a year"[1] and the late Harry V. Radford, in a history of the Adirondack beaver,[2] estimated that there were probably many million beavers in the province at that time. There were beavers on Manhattan Island when it was settled by the Dutch, and Beaver Street (formerly the Bever Paatje and Bever Graft) marks the site of a little stream where we may conclude they had built a beaver dam. The intelligence and industry of these little animals, their ingenuity as house-builders and their amphibious character make them eloquent symbols of the city of New York. So far as we know, the use of the beaver in the arms of New Netherland, New Amsterdam and New York City is unique in heraldry.

The words *Novi Belgii* in the legend of the seal of New Netherland recall the time when the Belgian and Dutch Netherlands were politically

[1] Montanus, *Doc. Hist. of N. Y.*, IV, 120–121.

[2] *Annual Reports, N. Y. State Forest, Fish and Game Commission* for 1904–5–6, pages 389–418. This article may be consulted for bibliography of the beaver.

united, and also that earlier period when Cæsar, referring to the peoples of Gaul, wrote: *Horum omnium fortissimi sunt Belgae*,—of all these, the Belgae are the bravest.

SEAL OF NEW AMSTERDAM

In 1653, New Amsterdam secured, after many petitions and remonstrances, a form of municipal government, and on December 24, of that year, the Burgomasters and Schepens asked the West India Co., for "a City seal different from the seal of the Province."[1] On May 18, 1654, the Directors of the Company wrote to Stuyvesant:

> "We have decreed that a seal for the City of New Amsterdam shall be prepared and forwarded."[2]

The vessel by which the seal was sent from Holland sailed in July, 1654, and on December 8 of that year "the Director General delivered to the presiding Burgomaster, Mart. Cregier, the painted

[1] *Records of New Amsterdam*, Fernow, I, 145.

[2] *Records of New Amsterdam*, I, 145, 219; *Docs. Rel. Col. Hist. N. Y.*, XIV, 262, 266.

coat-of-arms, with the seal of New Amsterdam and the silver signet which were sent by the Directors in the ship *Peartree*."[1]

The seal of 1654 contains reminiscences of the coat-of-arms of old Amsterdam and the seal of New Netherland. It consists of a shield charged with a pale or vertical band in the center, upon which are arranged in a vertical row the three saltire crosses which appear in the arms of the mother city. On each side of the pale is a narrow vertical band which does not appear in the arms of Amsterdam. The crest of the new arms is a beaver, taken from the seal of New Netherland. Above the crest are a mantle and a small escutcheon bearing the monogram G. W. C., standing for *Geoctroyeerde West Indische Compagnie*, or *Chartered West India Company*. Below the coat-of-arms is the legend *Sigillum Amstelodamensis in Novo Belgio*, meaning "seal of Amsterdam in New Belgium" (New Netherland). The whole is surrounded by a wreath. A drawing of this seal is shown in Plate I.

[1] Vanderkemp's translation of Dutch records at Albany in O'Callaghan's *Doc. Hist. N. Y.*, III, 397.

Mr. Wilde, in *The Civic Ancestry of New York City and State*, makes a reasonable conjecture as to the coloring of the arms, when he suggests that the shield is red, the pale black, and the crosses white, as in the arms of Amsterdam, and that the vertical bands separating the black pale from the red color on each side are of gold or silver, to comply with the rule of heraldry (violated in the arms of Amsterdam) which requires that color shall not be placed on color or metal on metal.[1] The mantling, it is believed, is a tri-color of orange, white and blue, in the order named, reading from the top downward, the colors of the mantle having the same significance as those of the official City flag mentioned hereafter.

SEAL OF NEW YORK, 1669

On August 29/September 8, 1664, articles of capitulation were signed by the Dutch and English and New Amsterdam was surrendered to

[1] In water-marks on paper which was evidently made in Amsterdam and which was used in the early official records of the City of New York now in the City Clerk's office, this heraldic error in the arms of Amsterdam is corrected as it is in the arms of New Amsterdam.

the English. On September 7 (says a letter to the West India Co.), the inhabitants were ordered "not to call this place otherwise than New York, on the Island of Manhattans, in America."[1] The new name of the city was given in honor of James, Duke of York, to whom the province had been patented by King Charles II. in March, 1664.[2] It is derived from the name of the old city of York in England, the significance of which is explained hereafter.

For nine months the Dutch form of government by Schout, Burgomasters and Schepens continued. On June 12/22, 1665, Governor Nicolls signed a proclamation in which he said:

> "Upon Mature deliberacon & advice, I have thought it necessary to Revoke & discharge, and by these Presents in his Majesties Name, do revoke and discharge the fforme and Ceremony of Government of this his Majesties Towne of New Yorke, under the name or names, style or styles of Schout, Burgomasters & Schepens," and that the new government "shall bee knowne

[1] *Documents Rel. Col. Hist. N. Y.*, II, 415.
[2] *Colonial Laws of N. Y.* I, 1–5.

and called by the Name & Style of Mayor Aldermen & Sherriffe, according to the Custome of England in other his Majesties Corporacons."[1]

In accordance therewith the Mayor and Aldermen were formally installed on June 14/24, 1665.

It was not, however, until 1669 that the city had its first seal under the English régime, and, by an interesting coincidence, it was granted by the Duke of York on the Fourth of July (old style). It was authorized as follows[2]:

"James Duke of Yorke and Albany, Earl of Ulster, Lord high Admirall of England and Ireland, Constable of Douer Castle, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and Gouern[r] of Pourtsmouth &ca.

"Whereas I have thought fit to appoint two Seales to be made, the one for the Province and the other for the Corporation of New Yorke (:which I haue sent unto you by M[r] Thomas de Lauall) and to Direct that they shall be made use of uppon all Publicq Concernments, both of the Province & Corporation afores[d]: These are to authorize & require You, that from and after Yo[r] receipts the said Seales, you Cause

[1] *Colonial Laws of New York*, I, 100–101.

[2] *Records of New Amsterdam*, Fernow, VI, 199–200.

the same and no others to be made use of uppon all occasions, for Sealing of Warrants, Writs, Executions, Pattents, Graunts, and all other Publicq Acts and Instruments, W^ch^ any Wayes Concerne either the Province or Corporation of New Yorke respectively, For W^ch^ this shal be Yo^r^ Warrant: Given under my hand and Seale at St: James this 4th of July 1669.

"JAMES."

"To Collonell Francis Louelace my Govern^r^ of New Yorke

"By Command of his Roy: Highnesse

"M: WREN."

The foregoing command and the proceedings attending the presentation of the corporate insignia are recorded in the minutes of the Mayor's Court held at New York, October 5, 1669, as follows[1]:

"Capt^n^ Louelace appearing in Court, and declared that he Was Commanded by his honn^r^ the Govern^r^ to Present to the Worshipp^ll^ May^r^ & Aldermen of this Corporation, a Letter from his honnour, with a Seal for the Corporation, with a Silver Mace, and Seven Gownes for the Mayor Aldermen & Sherif, sent from his

[1] *Records of New Amsterdam*, VI, 196, gives the date of the session Oct. 5; but page 199 dates the document itself October 6.

Royall Highnesse to his honnr the Govr for to be presented to this Court; Wch said Letter from his honnr being opened and Read in open Court, jnthimating as followeth:—

"Mr Mayor, and You the rest of the Aldermen—

"As a Perticular Testimony of his R. Highnesse grace and fauour to this his Citty of New Yorke, I am Commanded to present you from him, this Present Viz: a Publicq Seale for the Corporation, a Silver Mace, and Gownes both for the Mayor & Aldermen, and although he esteemes somme of these, but as the Gayety and Circumstantial part of Government, Yet you may be assured, as to What is more essential and Substantiall, itt shall receaue all encouragement and hartey assistance from him, and I must further add, that haveing the honnr to be his Governr General in these parts, I doe assure You that Wherein I may, any Way be Servicable to You, I shal Cheirefully apply my mind to it, who professe no higher Cogitations then what shal tend to My Royal Masters Intrest, and the Publicq Welfare of those Comitted to my Charge; Iff therefore You Will Consider of Somme Methode for the better regulation of Yr Corporation and present it to me, What I find reasonable and practicable, I shall Willingly allow of, and What appeares above my Strength I shal with the best Convenience transmit ouer to Receive his R: H: assent, from

Whome I doubte not, but you will have such Satisfaction, as is agreable to Yo^r^ Necesseties and desires, I haue no more, but to Wish You all happinesse and an assurance that I am

"Yo^r^ afectionate friend and Servant

"FRAN: LOUELACE.

Fort James the 6^th^ of Octob^r^ 1669."

The design of the provinical seal above referred to is well known. It consists of the arms of the house of Stuart, surrounded by the garter with the motto *Honi soit qui mal y pense*, above which is the ducal coronet, all of which is encircled by the legend *Sigill: Provinc: Nov: Eborac:* as shown in Plate II.

The design of the city seal of 1669 is not certainly known. As the beaver, which appeared in the seal of New Amsterdam, also appears in the seal of 1686, it seems reasonable to infer that it was included in the intermediate seal of 1669; and if the English seal of 1669 represented the symbol of the commodity upon which the Dutch commerce was principally founded, it seems likely that it also included the emblems of the industry which was the foundation of their own prosperity,

namely, the windmill and flour barrels.[1] If the seal had a crest, it would be natural that a ducal coronet should surmount the arms of the Duke of York's own city, as it formed the crest of the arms of the provincial seal of the same year. In other words, it would not be surprising if the city seal of 1669 was similar to the small seal which was in use in 1687[2] and which is shown on Plate III; but this is purely conjecture, and must so remain until an authentic description or impression of the seal of 1669 can be found.

SEAL OF 1686

On November 9, 1683, the Common Council petitioned Governor Dongan to confirm by charter the rights previously granted to the city, including that of a common seal; and on April 27,

[1] "From the first settlement of the government," say the *Common Council Minutes* (I, 142), New York was the staple for bolting flour and making biscuit for exportation. The industry was therefore well established in 1669.

[2] Mr. Wilde, in a footnote on page 43 of his *Civic Ancestry of New York*, by a reference to No. 5 of the Paulding seals in the New York Historical Society, which is identical with the upper seal shown in Plate III, implies his belief that it is in fact the seal of 1669, but does not actually say so. Mr. Victor H. Paltsits is of the opinion that the two seals are not identical.

1686, was granted the famous charter which provided, among other things:

> "That the said Mayor Aldermen and Comonalty of the said Citty of New Yorke and their Successo's shall and may for ever hereafter have one Comon Seale to Serve for the Sealing of all and Singular their Affaires and Businesses touching or Concerning the said Corporacon. And it shall and may be Lawfull to and for the said Mayor Aldermen and Comonaltye of the said Citty of New Yorke and their Successors as they shall see Cause to breake Change Alter and new make their said Comon Seale when and as often as to them it shall seem Convenient."[1]

About three months later, namely, on July 24, 1686, a new seal—the first adopted by the city itself pursuant to charter rights—was presented to the Common Council and approved. The minutes of the Common Council read as follows:

[1] The record of the petition of Nov. 9, 1683, is in the printed *Common Council Minutes*, I, 104. The charter is printed in vol. I, p. 186. *Colonial Laws of New York* and on pp. 290–305 of the *Common Council Minutes*. On p. 296 of the latter is the reference to the seal. The original parchment charter is deposited in the N. Y. Public Library. The original provincial record is in the office of the Secretary of State at Albany, in the original engrossed Liber I of Patents, pp. 278–309.

"The Mayor Presented the New Seale of this Citty with this inscription, Sigillum Civitat Novi Which is agreed upon and ordered to be the Comon Seale of this Citty and to Remaine in the Custody of the mayor for the time being."

In the original manuscript volume of the Common Council Minutes from which the foregoing quotation is made, there is a blank space after the word *Novi*. In the original rough draft of these minutes which is preserved in the Records Room of the City Clerk in the Municipal Building, the word *Novi* (apparently written originally *Nov.*) is followed by the word *Eboracen*, an abbreviation of *Eboracensis*. It was probably not copied into the formal volume of minutes because of the uncertainty whether the form "Eboracensis" or "Eboraci" should be used.

The earliest known impression of this seal is upon a grant dated September 1, 1687, by which the city conveyed to Conraed Ten Eyck a lot of land 24 by 95 feet in size on the original water-front opposite what is now No. 75 Pearl Street. The document is signed by N. Bayard, Mayor, and is

SEAL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, 1686,
WITH DUCAL CORONET

SEAL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, 1686,
WITH IMPERIAL CROWN

attested by the "common Seale of said citty."[1] It is in possession of Mr. Frank Wessells Demarest of East Orange, N. J.

From this impression the seal may be described. It is oval in shape, measuring $2\frac{3}{16}$ inches in length $1\frac{7}{8}$ inches in width. In the center is a shield charged saltire-wise with the sails of a windmill. Between the sails in chief is a beaver; in the corresponding position in base a beaver; and between the sails on each flank a flour barrel. The dexter supporter is a sailor, resting his left hand upon the shield. His right hand holds a cross-staff which extends above his right shoulder and from the same hand depends a lead-line. The sinister supporter is an Indian, wearing a head-dress of many feathers, his right hand resting upon the shield, his left holding by the middle a one-piece bow the lower end of which rests upon the ground. The supporters stand upon a horizontal branch, which may be laurel, and beneath which is the date 1686. The crest is a ducal coronet. Upon a ribbon surrounding the lower part of the coat-of-

[1] A copy of this grant is printed in the *New York Evening Post* of January 9, 1915.

arms is the legend: *Sigill: Civitat: Novi: Eborace.* The seal is reproduced in Plate III.

The Windmill was not a new device in heraldry at the time of the adoption of this seal. The coat-of-arms of the Van Cortlandt family, as recorded in the Hall of Records in Amsterdam, Holland, and brought to this country in 1637, exhibited the sails of a windmill saltire-wise, with a star in each of the four interspaces which are occupied by the beavers and barrels in the New York City coat-of-arms and with a fifth star in the center at the junction of the sails. The coat-of-arms of Olof Stevensen van Cortlandt may be seen thus depicted in Bolton's *History of Westchester County* (I, 100,) and Wilson's *Memorial History of New York* (I, 394, 463). As Van Cortlandt was one of the leading citizens and a Burgomaster of New Amsterdam at the time of the surrender to the English, was one of the six Commissioners who met the English deputies and arranged the terms of capitulation, and took a leading part in the affairs of the renamed city of New York in which he was living in 1686, one is tempted to think that the idea of the windmill as an heraldic device in the

city seal may have been suggested by the Van Cortlandt arms. Windmills naturally remind one of Holland, where they are used in such numbers to pump water from the lower ditches to the higher, and for milling purposes,[1] but it does not necessarily follow that the windmill in the city coat-of-arms is a Dutch windmill. Windmills were and still are used in England; and they were used in New Amsterdam and New York. The first mill erected in New Amsterdam in 1626 was a horse-mill, built by François Molemaecker, over which was a spacious room for religious worship[2]; but the principal sources of mechanical power on the Island of Manhattan before the era of steam were wind and water. Only one or two streams on Manhattan Island had volume enough to run mills; but there were several windmills. One of the earliest, which excited the amazement of the Indians, stood in what is now Battery Place just west of Broadway. In views of New Amsterdam from the south it appears over the southwest

[1] Modern motors are being introduced into Dutch windmills and the characteristic sails are beginning to disappear, thus robbing the landscape of a picturesque feature.

[2] Wassenaer's *Historisch Verhael.*

bastion of the fort. Its location is indicated on the so-called Duke's plan of 1664. Other windmills were located on a hill south of Maiden Lane and west of Pearl Street[1]; near Church and Cortlandt Streets[2]; on the northwest side of Park Row about where the Municipal Building stands[3]; near the corner of Oliver Street and the New Bowery[4]; and on the west side of the Bowery between Canal and Hester Streets.[5] There were many others. The significance of the windmill in the city arms is to be interpreted in connection with the flour barrels.

The Flour Barrels symbolize the industry upon which the prosperity of New York in the early English régime chiefly depended. Soon after the English took New York, the city was granted the staple right of bolting flour. When the Common Council in 1683 petitioned for the confirmation

[1] Picture of Smith's Vly in Early Times, Valentine's *Manual*, 1861.

[2] Rev. John Miller's plan of 1695.

[3] Nicolls map of about 1665; Lyne survey or Bradford map, 1731. This is possibly one of the two windmills which appear in the illustrations accompanying the journal of the Labadists, Dankers and Sluyter, 1680.

[4] Montressor map 1775.

[5] Holland map 1757; Ratzer map 1766.

by charter of privileges enjoyed since 1665, it enumerated among other things the following:

> "Noe fflower was to be bolted or packed or biskett made for Exportacon butt in the Citty of New York being for the encouragm^t^ of trade and keepeing up the Reputacon of New York flower which is in greater request in the West Indies and the only support and maintennance of the Inhabitants of this Citty and if not confirmed to them will ruine and depopulate the same."[1]

In consequence of that privilege "the Citty hath been much increased with Inhabitants, by the Manufactories of ye Said Flower, bread, and Cask, &c."[2]

From the above quotation it appears that the manufacture of flour barrels as well as flour was a leading occupation of the inhabitants.

The Beavers in the seal of 1686 have the historical significance of the same device in the earlier seals.

The Indian, forming the sinister supporter, is represented as a bald-headed individual in the

[1] *Docs. Rel. Col. Hist. N. Y.*, III, 338. *Common Council Minutes*, I, 104.

[2] Supreme Court of Judicature, Lyndall *vs.* Schuyler, October, 1692.

absurd woodcut in the *Documentary History of New York*, volume IV, page 396. In the seal itself, the Indian wears a head-dress of many feathers like the war-bonnet of the Plains Indians. In the seal of 1915, this figure has been made to conform to authentic descriptions of the Indians about Manhattan. The Manhattan Indians, who were coastal Algonquins, and the interior Indians, the Iroquois, had linguistic and other differences, but they had some customs in common. One was the way in which the men dressed their hair. Dominie Megapolensis, writing of the Mohawks in 1644, says:

> "The men have a long lock of hair hanging down, some on one side of the head and some on both sides. On top of their heads they have a streak of hair from the forehead to the neck about the breadth of three fingers and this they shorten until it is about two or three fingers long and it stands right on end like a cock's comb or hog's bristles. On both sides of this cock's comb they cut all the hair short except the aforesaid locks . . . and here and there small locks."[1]

[1] *Narratives of New Netherland*, Jameson, 173.

And David Pietersen de Vries, writing in 1642, says:

> "I will state something of the nations about Fort Amsterdam. . . . The Indians . . . have black hair with a long lock which they braid and let hang on one side of the head. The hair is shorn on top of the head like a cock's comb."[1]

This custom is excellently illustrated in contemporary pictures of the Virginia Indians, who were Algonquins like the Manhattan Indians.[2] These Indians are represented with only one, two or three feathers in their hair when they have any, and not with the war-bonnet of the western Indians.

In the seal of 1686, the Indian is correctly represented with a one-piece bow (technically called a self-bow), but in the modern seal lately in use and in other delineations of it, the bow is a compound or double-curved bow with a straight handle in the middle. The eastern Indians did

[1] *Narratives of New Netherland*, Jameson, 217.

[2] Etchings by De Bry in *Hariot's Relation*, 1590, based on drawings made by John White in Virginia. Picture of Capt. John Smith taking the King of the Pamunkey Indians prisoner in 1608 in Smith's *General History of Virginia*, etc. Picture of the attire of the Susquehanna Indians on Smith's map of Virginia.

not use the compound bow,[1] and in the standard seal of 1915 it is restored to the single-curved form as in the seal of 1686 and as authenticated in the illustrations of Algonquin types mentioned in the foot-note on the preceding page.

The Sailor, forming the dexter supporter, has been misunderstood and misrepresented more than any other feature of the seal. Dr. E. B. O'Callaghan, in the *Documentary History of New York*, III, 398 (copied in Valentine's *Manual*, 1851, 420), says:

> "Supporters, two Indian chiefs proper; the one on the dexter side holds a war club in his right hand, the one on the sinister holds in his left hand a bow. In the dexter corner over the Indian's head is a cross patriarchal, as emblematic of the Gospel to which he is subject."

When one sees the naked, manikin-like figure of the dexter supporter represented in the wood-cut accompanying O'Callaghan's description, he is not surprised at this misreading of the device. In the original seal, the figure is a very decently clothed sailor, wearing knee-breeches. The object

[1] *Hand-book of American Indians*, Hodge, Bureau of Ethnology.

in his right hand is not a war club but a lead-line for sounding the depth of the water; and the double-cross above him is not a patriarchal cross but a cross-staff, a navigating instrument. In the patriarchal cross, the upper crosspiece is shorter than the lower, while in the seal the upper is longer than the lower. The Art Commission Associates also received the suggestion that the cross was the emblem of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, but upon inquiry in New York and London, it was learned that the Society never used such an emblem. In the technical description of navigating instruments in Capt. John Davis's *Seaman's Secrets*, 1607, reprinted in volume 59 of the publications of the Hakluyt Society, the double cross-staff is illustrated as it appears in the seal, with the longer crosspiece (transom, or transversary) farthest away from the eye.[1] The cross-staff is frequently depicted in old portraits and maps, as in Montanus' engraving of Columbus and in the vignette

[1] For fuller description of the cross-staff and the manner of its use, see Annual Report of the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society for 1910, pp. 276–278.

on the West Indische Paskaert by Anthony Jacobsz. (circ. 1641), which is reproduced in volume I of *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of New York.* The latter is particularly suggestive, as the sinister supporter in this vignette, like the dexter in the seal of 1686, is a man holding a sounding lead, while the dexter supporter is a man "taking the sun" with a cross-staff.[1] As Henry Hudson used the cross-staff and by its means first ascertained the latitude of the entrance to New York harbor, 40° 30′, the restoration of this device in the seal of 1915 is particularly interesting.

The Crown, forming the crest of the seal of 1686, on the Ten Eyck land grant of 1687, is a ducal coronet. This is surprising, because in 1685 the Duke of York ascended the throne as James II. At a date not known at the present writing, the crest on the seal was properly changed to an imperial crown, showing the distinguishing arches rising from the circlet and supporting the orb and cross. The Manuscript Section of the New York

[1] The triple cross-staves in this vignette are erroneously depicted with the smallest cross-pieces farthest from the eye.

State Library can give no light on the question of the date of the change from the ducal coronet to the imperial crown owing to the fact that all the seals which appeared on documents in the New York Colonial Manuscripts or other manuscripts in the collection were so melted by heat at the time of the fire in the Capitol in 1911 that even on documents which otherwise were fairly well preserved the impressions of the seals are entirely lost. But the change was made at least as early as 1701, for a beautiful impression of the seal with the imperial crown may be seen at the New York Historical Society on a document dated October 1, 1701, certifying that Thomas Evans had been made a freeman of the City. This impression is so sharp that it even shows the row of buttons on the sailor's jacket.[1]

The Date, 1686, in the seal of that year is self-explanatory. This date was retained until after

[1] It is a curious fact that while the woodcut accompanying O'Callaghan's description of the seal in the *Documentary History of New York*, III, 398, shows an imperial crown, his printed description calls it a coronet. As he could not have mistaken the crest in his illustration for a coronet, except through ignorance, one wonders whether he did not write his description from an earlier example which exhibited the coronet.

the Revolution, but then fell into disuse as having no special significance. In designing the standard form of seal in 1915, the Art Commission Associates thought that in inserting a date, it was better to use a date which possessed some capital meaning, and therefore adopted the date 1664, the year in which the City was first named New York.

The Name of New York, which appears in the Latin form in the legend of the seal, has an interesting origin. Through the Duke of York it comes from the old cathedral City of York in England. The word is derived from two ancient roots, *ure* or *euor*, meaning water, and *ac* meaning place. Euor-ac, contracted to York, means "place at the water." The old City of York is situated on the Ouse River, which was anciently the Ure, a name now applied to one of its tributaries. New York, therefore, is a transplanted place-name with unusual propriety of meaning. In some languages the letters *u*, *v* and *b* are interchangeable under certain circumstances owing to well-known physiological causes and phonetic rules.[1] Thus

[1] Familiar examples are Havana, Habana; and Servia, Serbia.

Euor-ac, or Evor-ac, becomes Ebor-ac, and with the Latin termination *um*, we have Eboracum.

SMALL SEAL OF THE PERIOD

We have referred on page 48 preceding to the inexplicable ducal coronet on the first seal of 1686. Another mystery is presented by the existence of another "common seal" of the City with ducal coronet at the same time as the impression of the seal of 1686 on the Ten Eyck land grant of 1687. It is a round seal, about $1\frac{3}{16}$ of an inch in diameter. Upon a shield are the windmill, beavers and barrels as in the larger seal. Above the shield is a ducal coronet, and on each side is some scroll-like mantling. It has no legend or motto. The earliest impression of this seal known to the writer is on the certificate of allegiance of Johannes Kipp in the New York Historical Society, dated September 8, 1687. Other impressions are upon a land grant to Anna Maria Van Horne, signed by Mayor Abraham De Peyster, and dated April 21, 1692, in the possession of the New York Title Guarantee & Trust Co.; and warrants signed by Mayors Ebenezer Willson (1709), Caleb Heathcote (1711) and John Johnston (1719) in the Records Room of

the City Clerk in the Municipal Building. Our illustration (Plate III) is from a very sharp impression on the Heathcote document. The document begins as follows:

"City of New York } SS Caleb Heathcote Esq^r Mayor of the City of New York To Samuell Bayard Esq^r Alderman of the Dock Ward of the said City Greeting:"

Then follows an order to summon the electors of the ward to choose a Constable in place of David Lyell who refused to serve; and it concludes:

> "Given under my hand and the *Common Seal* of the said City the sixteenth day of October in the tenth year of her Majesties Reign Anno Dom. 1711.
>
> CALEB HEATHCOTE."

It is not known when and under what circumstances this seal came into existence. Between the granting of the seal of 1669 and the year 1687, when we find this other seal in use, there is record of the making of only one City seal, namely, that of 1686 with the legend. If this were the seal of 1669 still continued in use, the problem would be solved, but that cannot now be established. That

the use of both seals was officially recognized is evidenced by the fact that on April 24 and again on October 15, 1691, the Common Council fixed the Mayor's fees for affixing the seals at "Six shill. for Euery great Seale and three Shillings for a small Seale," and on October 14, 1689, ex-Mayor Stephen Van Cortlandt was directed by the Common Council to deliver to the High Constable "y^e^ Citys Charter and also y^e^ City Seales"—showing that there were more seals than one.

THE MAYORALTY AND OTHER SEALS OF 1735

In 1735, the Common Council had trouble with Mayor Paul Richard in regard to the custody of the common seal of the City. The Mayor refused to surrender the seal, and on July 8, 1735, the Council appointed a committee to seek legal counsel as to the proper steps to be taken "for Breaking the said seal now in the hands of the Said Mayor or declaring the same void, and for making a New seal for the use of this Corporation." On July 22 the committee reported that the Corporation had full power to determine who should keep the seal; whereupon the Common Council minutes continue:

"M[r] Mayor having Consented to deliver the seal of this Corporation to the Common Clerk of this Corporation for the use of the Said Corporation, it is Ordered that A seal be forthwith made and delivered to M[r] Mayor; which Seal is to be Called the seal of the Office of Mayorality of the City of New York, that the Said Seal be Round somthing larger than a Dollar, the City Arms to be Engraved thereon, and that the Motto be (City of New York Seal of Mayorality) and that M[r] Le Roux make the same with all Expedition."

The Mr. Le Roux referred to was an Alderman and a goldsmith. On September 16, 1735, the Common Council approved his bill amounting to £5:9:3. The original bill, on file in the Records Room of the City Clerk in the Municipal building, reads as follows·

"The Corpor[n] of New York to Charles Le Roux Dr.

To 3 O[z] 5[d] silver in one Seale for the offis of Mayoralty	£1:9:3
To engraving the Seale	4:–:–
	£5:9:3

p[d] CHARLES LE ROUX

Sept. 16, 1735."

The action of the Common Council in July led to further controversy, the particulars of which may be found at pages 263–266, 272, 288–290, 295, 303–304, of volume IV of the printed Minutes. The law of July 8 was repealed and on October 23, 1735, a new law was adopted "declaring to what uses the seal of this corporation, the seal of the Mayor's Court, and the seal of the mayoralty of this City shall be put unto." There were now three well-established seals with different names for prescribed uses.

THE SEAL OF 1784

The British evacuated New York on November 25, 1783, and steps were at once taken to reorganize the City government. On December 15, 1783, a Board of seven Aldermen and as many Assistants was elected, and on February 7, 1784, Mayor James Duane was installed. On March 16 following the Common Council passed an ordinance entitled "A Law for altering and directing the uses of the public Seales of this City" and directed its publication in one of the newspapers

of the city.[1] The law appears in a rare copy of *The New York Packet and the American Advertiser* of April 8, 1784, in the New York Public Library as follows:

"A Law for altering and directing the Uses of the Public Seals of this City.

"Be it ordained by the Mayor, Aldermen and Commonalty of the city of New York, in Common Council convened, and it is hereby ordained by the authority of the same, That the Seal, commonly called the City Seal, the Seal, commonly called the Seal of the Mayor's Court, and the Seal commonly called the Seal of the Mayoralty, be respectively altered in the following manner, That is to say, That the device, on the said seals respectively, in representation of an Imperial crown be defaced, and that instead thereof, the crest of the arms of the state of New York, that is to say, a representation of a semi-globe, with a soaring eagle thereon, be inserted, and that the Mayor be authorized to cause the said seals respectively to be altered accordingly.

"And be it further ordained by the authority aforesaid, That the said first beforementioned

[1] The proceedings of the Common Council from Feb. 10, 1784, to June 24, 1789, are printed in the *Annual Reports of the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society* for 1912, 1913, 1914 and 1915.

Seal be, and remain in the custody and keeping of the Clerk of this city, and that the same be put and affixed to all grants, leases, freedoms, warrants and other instruments and writings which shall, from time to time be made, granted or issued, by order of the Common Council or otherwise, provided for by the charter of the city, and to freedoms granted by order of the Mayor's Court, and that the said seal be not put or used to any other purpose whatsoever.

"That the said small seal commonly called the Seal of the Mayor's Court also be and remain in the custody and keeping of the said Clerk, and be put and affixed to all process, issuing out of the said Court, and the Court of General Sessions of the Peace, and to no other purpose whatsoever.

"And the said Seal, commonly called the Seal of Mayoralty, be and remain in the custody and keeping of the Mayor of the said city for the time being, and that the same may, by the said Mayor, or by the said Mayor, or Court of Aldermen of the said city for the time being, be put and affixed to all such writings and instruments, depositions, affidavits, examplifications, testimonials, protests, and other matters and things as are usual and customary to be certified under the public seal of any Mayoralty, for the better attesting of the truth of the matters and things thereby certified."

At the meeting of the Common Council on September 1, 1784, the Mayor produced the new seals as thus recorded:

> "M[r] Mayor pursuant to the Ordinance of this Corporation in that case made & provided produced to the Board the Corporation, the Mayoralty & the Mayors Court Seals altered agreeable to the Directions of the said Ordinance, which said Seals being respectively examined & approved of by the Board it was thereupon Ordained determined and declared that the said Seals respectively be adopted as the public Seals of this City & that the old Seals be broken by the Clerk in presence of M[r] Mayor and the said Old Seals were respectively broken accordingly."

At the same meeting the bill of Andrew Billings for making the seals, amounting to £15:10, was approved for payment. The original bill, preserved among the documents in the Records Room of the City Clerk, reads as follows:

> "The Hon[ble] The Corporation of the City of New York
>
> To And[w] Billings Dr.
>
> To making and Engraving
>
> 1784 the Greate Seal of the Cor-
>
> Aug[t] 30 poration £7: 9:4

PLATE IV

SEAL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
1784

SEAL OF THE MAYORALTY
1784

To making and Engraving the Seal of Mayoralty 6:10:8
To making and Engraving the Seal of the Mayors Court 1:10:0

15:10:0

Errors Excepted
ANDREW BILLINGS"

A fine impression of this seal at the New York Historical Society (see Plate IV) shows a shield bearing the windmill, beavers and flour barrels; the dexter supporter a sailor in long trousers holding a lead-line; the sinister supporter an Indian with full feathered headdress, holding a double-curved bow (which the Algonquin Indians did not use); the crest, a flying eagle rising to the dexter; the date 1686; and the legend *Sigillum Civitat. Nov. Eborac.* On each side of the crest, rising from the corners of the shield, is a spray or branch bearing some kind of flower or fruit. The cross-staff is omitted over the sailor.

The Eagle and hemisphere are taken, as stated in the ordinance, from the arms of the State which were adopted March 16, 1778 (chapter 12). That

act, however, did not describe the arms, and when they were described by chapter 59 of the laws of 1909 (chapter 57 of the Consolidated Laws) the hemisphere was interpreted as a two-thirds globe. The description of 1909 reads:

> "Crest: On a wreath azure and or, an American eagle proper, rising to the dexter from a two thirds globe terrestrial, showing the north Atlantic ocean with outlines of its shores."

The adoption of the eagle in the State arms antedated the first suggestion of an eagle in the National arms by four years, William Barton having suggested the latter in 1782.[1] The source of this emblem in the State arms is not known. The eagle has occupied a prominent place in the mythology, symbolism and heraldry of both the Old and New Worlds from time out of mind. The Romans carried it before their armies; Charlemagne adopted it as an emblem after his coronation in 800; and it was a familiar device in later heraldry. It symbolized divinity, empire, power, freedom, rising aspirations and other noble conceptions. The eagle, phœnix and other

[1] *History of the Seal of the United States*, by Gaillard Hunt, 1909.

birds used in ancient devices could not have escaped the attention of Americans when they came to design American coats-of-arms, and it is suggested by Mr. Wilde in his *Civic Ancestry of New York*, that a phœnix on a globe in a Dutch medal may have been the source of the idea which was given an American adaptation. It is an interesting fact, however, that there is—or was, in 1861,—preserved in the Royal Museum in Amsterdam, an ancient New York token, bearing on the obverse an eagle with wings displayed, rising to the dexter, and the legend "New Yorke in America." An electrotype copy is in the Yale University numismatic collection. The token bears no date, but the spelling of "New Yorke" indicates a pre-Revolutionary date and Mr. F. P. Brewer, in the *Historical Magazine* for October, 1861 (p. 294), attributes it to the period between 1700 and 1706. But probably the compelling reason for the adoption of the eagle by the State of New York in 1778, by the United States in 1782 and by the City of New York in 1784 was that the eagle is native to America and by its strength, daring and vision, suggests power, independence

and perspicacity. Furthermore, if the European eagle was prominent in European heraldry, the American eagle also had its place in American heraldry before and at the time of the coming of the white man to this continent; for the American Indians had a system of military, tribal and family designation "comparable with the heraldic system of Europe"[1] and the eagle was depicted on the body, totem poles, baskets, pottery and wigwams and by all the methods of art expression known to the aborigines. In New York State, where the eagle is bred, it was represented in the tribal pictography of the Iroquois[2] and probably of the coastal tribes. The eagle was universally venerated by the natives and occupies a large place in their religious ceremonies to this day. Its feathers are highly prized not only for ceremonial purposes but also for personal adornment, as appears from the head decoration of the coastal tribes and the elaborate war-bonnet of the Plains Indians. A tail of twelve war-feathers is said to be worth a pony among the latter.

[1] *Handbook of American Indians.* Hodge, Bureau of Ethnology.

[2] *Doc. Hist. N. Y.*, I, page 4 and illustrations.

As the city fathers of 1784 saw no incongruity in associating the American eagle with the pre-Revolutionary date of 1686 in their amended seal, the city fathers of 1915 have had no hesitation on account of the eagle crest in setting back the date on the standardized seal a few years farther to the historic year 1664 in which the City of New York was baptized with its present name.

VARIATIONS IN REPRESENTATIONS

The compelling reason for the Art Commission's recommendation of a standard design for the City seal was that both in times past and at the present time no fixed design has been adhered to in the delineation of the City arms. In woodcuts of the beaver these animals sometimes appear like dogs and sometimes like pigs with pointed snouts. The Indian is represented with a western war-bonnet on his head (seal of 1686), or bald-headed (woodcut of same), or with a cluster of feathers like a rooster's tail (Mayor's Passport, Corporation Manual, 1870). His apron follows the styles of different tribes at different times. His bow is the long one-piece bow, and also the double-

curved bow. He shifts uneasily from the sinister side to the dexter side, and when he gets tired he sits down (Diagram of Aldermen's Chamber, 1854, in Corporation Manual). The dexter supporter is equally unreliable in his conduct and more uncertain as to nationality and occupation. The learned Dr. E. B. O'Callaghan took him for an Indian, and in the great medallion inlaid in the pavement on the south side of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument in Riverside Park he is represented as a farmer holding a spade; but the consensus of public opinion is that he is a sailor. At times he is naked as if for a plunge overboard (O'Callaghan's wood-cut); but that he has a generous wardrobe is evident from the fact that he wears knee-breeches (1686), longer "pants" (1784), close-fitting trousers (1854) and long white sailor's trousers which roll up at the bottom (1870). In the '50's and '70's, he has a coat with rolling lapels, waistcoat, necktie and stove-pipe hat. Beginning with a smooth face so far as can be learned, in the '60's he wore side-whiskers (Manual title-page) and now sometimes appears provided with ample chin whiskers. He

exchanges places with the Indian from time to time, strikes different æsthetic attitudes (letter-head of the Board of Aldermen) and keeps the Indian company in sitting down occasionally (Mayor's Passport, Manual, 1870). He also keeps progress with the times in nautical science. He discards the old cross-staff (or what was equally useless in navigation, the patriarchal cross) and contents himself for a while with the lead-line; but as time goes on he acquires a sextant, and in order that he may not again be taken for an Indian, he is represented with an anchor and ships, which surely indicate his nautical character. The eagle, too, is restless on his perch, as perhaps is to be expected of a liberty loving eagle. In 1784 he is rising to the dexter, as required by law, but in the 19th century he mounts in the other direction. Generally he looks where he is going, but occasionally he looks backward to see if he is being followed, as has been his habit of late years (present City seal). Just after the Revolution, some flowers sprang up around the eagle (seal of 1784), but with the increasing population of the City the opportunities for gardening have grown less and

the flowers have disappeared, together with the old date 1686 which was retained for a while in the same seal.

This review of the vagaries in the representation of the City arms might be extended almost indefinitely with examples from official seals, letterheads, interior and exterior decorations of public buildings, policemen's badges and buttons, door-knobs in the court rooms, lamp-posts, etc.; but enough has been said to enable the reader to appreciate the motives of the Art Commission Associates in recommending a standard design in their report to the Art Commission on January 9, 1915.

THE OFFICIAL FLAG

The reasons for the recommendation of an official City Flag are set forth in the report of the Art Commission Associates dated January 9, 1915.

With respect to the perpendicular arrangement of the colors of the flag it may be added that the flag is not an imitation of the flag of the Netherlands, the Dutch East India Company or the Dutch West India Company, but a new flag,

embodying the historic colors of the Netherlands arranged in a distinctive way. The perpendicular arrangement follows that of the ensign of the old City of Amsterdam, in which the municipal colors —red, black and red (with three white saltire crosses on the black)—are so arranged; also of the old flag of the City of Paris which was of two colors, red and blue, arranged perpendicularly.[1] (At present Paris has no other flag than the French tri-color.) The order of the arrangement of the municipal colors of New York also follows the practice, exemplified in the French, Belgian and other tri-colors, of placing the darkest bar next to the staff. The placing of the City arms upon the flag follows in this respect not only the unofficial city flag formerly in use but also other precedent.

[1] Mr. Louis Annin Ames, president of Annin & Co., flag makers.

III

ART COMMISSION ASSOCIATES

REPORT ON THE

RESTORATION OF THE ANCIENT CORPORATE SEAL AND THE ADOPTION OF AN OFFICIAL FLAG

New York, January 9th, 1915.

To the Art Commission
of the City of New York.

Gentlemen:

At the annual meeting of the Art Commission Associates held in January last the undersigned were appointed a committee to consider and report:

1. An accurate rendering of the corporate seal of the City.
2. A suitable design for a flag to be adopted as the official colors of the City of New York.

As to the design of the City seal your Committee report that it has been their endeavor only to secure an accurate and artistic rendering of the seal of the City as heretofore adopted and now in use, in order to establish a well authenticated and properly executed standard. At the present time there is no standard of design for the City seal, and while the seals now in use in the Mayor's office and in the City departments conform in general character, scarcely any two of them are exactly alike and most of them are inaccurate and highly inartistic in execution. For the sake of consistency the seal wherever used should be absolutely uniform in design. It should also be as nearly accurate historically as possible and should be designed and executed with the highest artistic skill and with reference to its use not only as an imprint on official documents but as an architectural feature when carved on municipal buildings. In the latter aspect the need for a carefully studied and officially recognized design is of increasing importance in view of the greater prominence which is now given to the seal as an emblem and ornament upon buildings erected by the City.

An examination of the records enabled your Committee to obtain photographs of early impressions of the first City seal of which we have any exact information, adopted after the City came into the possession of the British in 1664 and took the name "New York." The Dongan Charter of April 27, 1686, gave authority to the Mayor, Aldermen and Commonalty and their successors "as they shall see cause to break, change, alter and new make their said Common Seal when and as often as to them shall seem convenient" (*Colonial Laws of New York*, I: 186). Mr. Victor H. Paltsits, formerly State Historian, is authority for the statement that the seal so granted, known as the "Seal of 1686," was the first City seal depending upon charter rights. At a meeting of the Common Council held on July 24, 1686, the Mayor presented "the New Seale of this City" (*Minutes Com. Coun.*, I: 179), and of this seal Martha Lamb says in her *History of New York* (I: 318):

> "It was richer and more elaborate than the old Dutch city seal; but it preserved the beaver, with the addition of a flour barrel and the arms

of a windmill, signifying the prevailing commerce and industry."

The design of the seal of 1686 was modified in 1784 by the substitution of the eagle in place of the royal crown as a crest, and has been reproduced with this alteration, and the insertion of the date "1664" in place of "1686."

The Committee have also been so fortunate as to secure the services of Mr. Paul Manship, the well-known sculptor, to execute a model of the seal from the photographs above mentioned. In this model, which is submitted herewith, all the details of the original seal are rendered with historic accuracy and fine artistic feeling, and your Committee feel that Mr. Manship has performed an important public service in thus preserving both the design and the spirit of the ancient seal of the City in a form which is available for use as a seal in the literal sense of the term and also as an imprint and architectural ornament.

Your Committee therefore recommend that the model so executed be adopted as the official design of the City seal, that it be cast in bronze or other

permanent form and kept in the Mayor's office, and that all representations of the seal impressed or printed on City documents or carved on City buildings hereafter shall be required to conform to this design.

As to the City flag your committee beg to report that the flag now in use consists of a white field bearing the seal of the City in dark blue. An exhaustive examination of the City records, however, has failed to disclose any resolution or other official action adopting the design of a flag for the City, nor has it been possible to determine when the present flag came into use; though resolutions have been passed from time to time by the Board of Aldermen directing the making of new City flags. In view of the fact that the present flag is not distinctive and has neither historical association nor artistic merit to commend it and that there appears to be no authority for its use except the mere fact of usage, your Committee are of the opinion that the City may properly and advantageously direct its discontinuance and adopt for the official flag a design which shall possess both historic association and artistic merit and which

shall also be readily distinguishable from other flags in general use.

Considered historically the colors which naturally suggest themselves are those which first floated over the Island of Manhattan, viz.: the orange, white and blue of the Dutch West India Company—which were also the colors of the United Provinces of the Netherlands in 1609 when Henry Hudson discovered the river named after him and when in 1626 New Amsterdam was settled by the Dutch. The origin of the Dutch flag is set forth in a history entitled *Oorsprong der Nederlandsche Vlag*" by J. C. DeJonge, published at Amsterdam in 1831, from which the following translation is made:

> "The Netherlands are not indebted to an alien prince for their famous flag, but the originator of the same is the Prince of Orange, that William I, beyond all praise, who is also the founder of the freedom of his people. This flag consisted of the colors of the Prince and what these colors were is shown by the commands of the admiralty of Zealand, published in 1587, which specifies the same as orange, white and blue. Already in 1582, at the time of the arrival of the Duke of Anjou, the Netherlands possessed

their own flag, and this was the insignia or livery of William the Silent; orange, white and blue, a flag borne by all the ships of the young republic in its warfare against Spain. The cry 'Oranje boven' proves that the orange was the topmost color."

Another work on *De Nederlandsche Vlag* by C. De Waard, published at Groningen in 1900, establishes the fact that prior to 1630 all flags used by the Dutch were orange, white and blue, and from the same authority it appears that a dark blue rather than a light blue was the shade in use.

We are also informed by Professor Alexander Smith, the head of the Department of Chemistry in Columbia University, that the blue from indigo, whether imported from India or Egypt or extracted from the plant known as "woad," which was cultivated throughout Europe, was the only fast dye of blue color which was known in 1626 when New Amsterdam was founded. This amounts to a demonstration that the blue of the original Dutch flag must have been of pure indigo, a sample of which has very kindly been furnished by Professor Smith, and the blue bunting in the specimen flag

herewith submitted has been specially dyed for the purpose and exactly matches the sample. As to the correct shade of orange, there has been no question, and it is believed that the colors in the specimen flag are all exact reproductions of those of the Dutch flag of 1626.

In the opinion of your committee, the combination of colors represented in the original Dutch flag has everything to commend it for adoption by the City, viz., historical association extending back to the very beginning of the settlement of New Amsterdam; artistic and decorative quality; and originality sufficient to distinguish it from flags in use by other cities or countries. As a matter of arrangement it seems desirable and in accordance with usage that the colors should be placed in perpendicular bars rather than horizontal stripes, the blue being nearest to the flag-staff. It also seems fitting that the seal of the City in blue should be superimposed upon the middle, or white bar of the flag.

Your committee therefore recommend the adoption by the City as its official flag, and as a substitute for the flag now in use, a flag combining

the colors orange, white and blue, arranged in perpendicular bars of equal dimensions, and bearing the seal of the City in blue upon the middle or white bar, the colors to conform as nearly as possible to those of the flag of the United Netherlands in 1626, as shown in the sample herewith submitted.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN B. PINE
I. N. PHELPS STOKES
R. T. H. HALSEY
FRANCIS C. JONES
Committee.

IV

ART COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

At a meeting of the Art Commission of the City of New York held at the City Hall on the 8th day of February, 1915, a report was submitted by a committee of the Art Commission Associates "On the restoration of the ancient corporate seal, and the adoption of an official flag" by the City of New York and it was thereupon unanimously

Resolved that the Art Commission accept the report of the Art Commission Associates "On the restoration of the ancient corporate seal and the adoption of an official flag" by the City of New York and heartily approve the recommendations therein contained; and

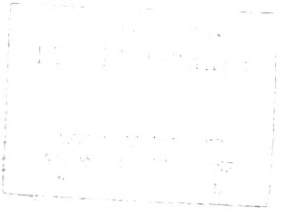
Resolved that the report be printed and that copies be sent to the Mayor and other members of the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, and to the Board of Aldermen; and

RESOLVED that the Art Commission recommend:

1. The adoption by the City of the model of the corporate seal of the City herewith submitted, as the official design of such seal, the same to be cast in bronze or other permanent form and kept in the safe in the Mayor's office, and the adoption of proper ordinances or other regulations requiring that hereafter all representations of the seal whether impressed or printed on City documents or publications or carved on City buildings shall be in exact conformity with such official design.

2. The adoption by the City as its official flag, and as a substitute for the flag now in use, a flag containing the colors orange, white, and blue arranged in perpendicular bars of equal dimensions (the blue being nearest to the flag staff), bearing the seal of the City in blue upon the middle or white bar, the colors to conform as nearly as possible to those of the flag of the United Netherlands in use in 1626.

JOHN A. MITCHELL,
Secretary.



·1664·

V

THE MEANING OF THE SEAL AND FLAG

At a public hearing before a Committee of the Board of Aldermen held in the Aldermanic Chamber on March 22, 1915, Mr. John B. Pine as chairman of a special committee appointed by the Art Commission Associates gave the following explanation of the report of the Committee:

The design for a City seal recommended by the Art Commission represents a conscientious effort to restore the ancient corporate seal of the City so far as that is possible. It is in no sense a new design and any criticism that it is not beautiful or that it does not meet heraldic requirements is irrelevant. No doubt a more beautiful seal could be designed but we regard it as of far more importance to perpetuate the seal which was adopted by the Common Council in 1686 and which ever since that date has been used by the City with but slight

modification as the symbol of its corporate entity. In the model which we now submit Mr. Paul Manship has given his services to our Committee, and has furnished a reproduction which preserves both the form and spirit of the old seal. The original crest was a ducal crown, in recognition of the Duke of York, but in 1784 the present crest consisting of "a semi-dome with a soaring eagle thereon" was substituted by the Common Council. The original seal bears the date 1686 when it was presented to the City by the then Mayor, but we have taken the liberty of substituting the date 1664 when the City passed under English control and was named "New York."

The original die of the seal has long since been lost or destroyed but the design now offered has been made from photographs of impressions taken from it and can therefore claim to be authentic. Its details have been carefully studied from contemporary documents, and record the historic development of the City. The beavers which appear on the shield preserve the characteristic feature of the coat-of-arms granted to the New Netherlands by the States General of Holland.

The windmill and flour barrels were added in 1686 as signifying the then prevailing commerce and industry. The costume and head-dress of the Indian conform to early descriptions and drawings of the tribe of the Manhattans, a branch of the Mohicans, living on Manhattan Island; and the sailor who appears as a supporter on the left of the shield is in the costume of an English sailor of the period, having in his hand a sounding line, and over his shoulder a "cross-staff," the implement by which the early navigators determined their latitude.

The general characteristics of this seal have been preserved from the date of its adoption to the present time, but so far as can be ascertained there has never been a standard design, and as the result a wide diversity exists in the imprints of the seal appearing on the official publications of the City and its departments. Scarcely any two of such imprints are alike and many of them misrepresent the seal in important particulars.

It will no doubt be conceded that the seals in use by the City and its departments should be uniform in design, and it is for the purpose of estab-

lishing a standard, which shall be historically accurate, and which shall preserve both the design and spirit of the ancient seal of the City, that the Art Commission recommend the adoption of the model now submitted.

Up to the present time the City of New York has never possessed an official flag in any true sense of the term. The flag which has been displayed on the City Hall, consisting of a white field bearing the seal of the City, was never formally adopted by the City authorities and had no distinctive characteristic or historic association, while the flag used by the Mayor and known as the "Mayor's Flag" only represents the Mayor in his official capacity. We feel that the City should have a flag which is distinctively our own, which shall tell the story of the City's origin and growth.

At our suggestion, the Art Commission have recommended for adoption as the official flag of the City of New York the colors which first floated over the Island of Manhattan nearly three hundred years ago when a little band of Dutchmen with a courage and an enterprise which have never been surpassed braved the dangers of unknown seas

and landed on these shores. It is to the courage and the enterprise of this handful of men that the City of New York owes its beginning, and it is largely the love of civil liberty and the ideals of democratic government which these men brought with them that have made New York the great city which it is to-day. We ask you to commemorate this service and to embody these ideals in the official flag of the City.

In our report we have explained in detail the investigation which we have made to ascertain the history of the flag and the exact colors used by the United Netherlands and the Dutch West India Company in 1626 as shown by historical authorities, which we have had translated from the Dutch, and to verify the colors by the best scientific opinion. There was no question that these colors were orange, white and blue, but as to the particular shade of blue there was some uncertainty. This we have removed by proving that the only fixed blue dye in use in 1626 was a pure indigo blue, whether made from woad or from the indigo plant, and the blue bunting in the specimen flag which we submit was especially dyed

for the purpose, a pure indigo blue. In the orange we have followed the distinctive color of the Prince of Orange, the defender of the liberty of the Netherlands. We believe that the flag now proposed accurately represents the original colors. In the flag of Henry Hudson and Peter Stuyvesant the colors were arranged in horizontal stripes, but we have placed them in perpendicular bars as being more distinctive and as affording a better opportunity for displaying the City seal. In our flag the colors are Dutch, the arms are English, the crest is distinctively American, but the flag as such is the flag of the City, which has grown from these beginnings to be the home of all nations, the great cosmopolitan city of the world, The City of New York

Chiefly, however, we urge you to adopt the flag of orange, white and blue as the flag of The City of New York for the sake of its meaning, as emblematic of the courage and independence which repelled the tyranny of Spain and founded the Dutch Republic, and which gave to New York as its birthright free government, free speech, free commerce, free schools, and free religion. This

flag is no mere decoration. It is a page of history and its colors perpetuate a great tradition. It stands for liberty and law. It represents the basic idea of civil government which the founders brought to us and which is our priceless heritage.

The suggestion made by the Chairman of your Committee, Mr. Curran, that the ordinances re-establishing the City seal and adopting the flag shall take effect on the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the installation of the present City government, is a happy inspiration. No more appropriate date could be selected, and it should be commemorated in a manner worthy of the event.

VI

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN

March 23, 1915.

Report of the Committee on Rules, in favor of adopting an Ordinance to re-establish the Corporate Seal of The City of New York.

THE Committee on Rules, to which was referred on March 16, 1915 (Minutes, page 1594), a recommendation by the Art Commission to re-establish the corporate seal of The City of New York, respectfully

REPORTS:

That, at a public hearing, the proposed change was urged by the same citizens as are mentioned in the report on the city flag (page 89). Great care has been taken to have all representations made on the model for the seal submitted to be historically authentic and correct, and it is now believed that

the seal proposed will contain all those features to which any historic authority is attached. The ordinance herewith submitted will enforce the use of one design on all City documents. The Committee recognizes the labor attached to this work, particularly the research involved, and compliments the Committee in charge upon the result thereof.

It recommends that the accompanying ordinance be adopted.

[Then follows the ordinance as adopted on this date.]

Henry H. Curran, Frank J. Dotzler, John Diemer, F. H. Wilmot, O. Grant Esterbrook, Frank L. Dowling, C. Augustus Post, Committee on Rules.

Alderman Curran moved the adoption of said ordinance.

The President, then in the chair, put the question whether the Board would agree to accept said report and adopt said ordinance.

Which was unanimously decided in the affirmative by the following vote:

AFFIRMATIVE—ALDERMEN

Bartscherer	Duggan	Mullen (Frank)
Bedell	Dujat	Mullen (Jas. F.)
Benninger	Ferguson	Nugent
Boschen	Ferrand	O'Rourke
Bosse	Eagan	Ottes
Brush	Fink	Pendry
Burden	Gaynor	Post
Burns	Hannon	Pouker
Carberry	Hogan	Quinn
Carroll	Jacobson	Reardon
Chorosh	Kenneally	Robitzek
Cole	Kenney	Rosenblum
Colne	Kochendorfer	Schmelzel
Cunningham	Lein	Schweickert
Curran	Levy	Squiers
Delaney	McCourt	Stapleton
Diemer	McGarry	Stevenson
Dixson	McNally	Taylor
Donnelly	Milligan	Trau
Dostal	Molen	Weil
Dotzler	Moore (Chas. J.)	Wendel
Dowling	Moore (Jesse D.)	Wilmot

and President Connolly, President Mathewson, by John G. Borgstede, Commissioner of Public Works; President Pounds, by Edmund W. Voorhies, Commissioner of Public Works; President Marks; the Vice-Chairman; the President—72.

Report of the Committee on Rules, in favor of adopting an Ordinance establishing an Official Flag for The City of New York.

March 23, 1915.

The Committee on Rules, to which was referred on March 16, 1915 (Minutes, page 1594), a recommendation by the Art Commission on the adoption of a City flag, respectfully

REPORTS:

That the Art Commission, through Messrs. John B. Pine, I. N. Phelps Stokes and Francis C. Jones, and Assistant Secretary Adams, together with Mr. V. H. Paltsits of the New York Public Library (former State Historian); Mr. Guy Van Amringe, for the Saint Nicholas Society, and Dr. Edward Hagaman Hall, for the American Scenic

and Historical Preservation Society, appeared before the Committee and advocated the adoption of the design presented by the Art Commission, which is also endorsed by the Colonial Dames of the State of New York. The Committee believes that a City flag is a distinctive advance in the cultivation of civic pride, and that the one recommended is most appropriate, and it therefore recommends that the accompanying ordinance be adopted.

[Then follows the ordinance as adopted on this date.]

Henry H. Curran, Frank J. Dotzler, John Diemer, F. H. Wilmot, O. Grant Esterbrook, Frank L. Dowling, C. Augustus Post, Committee on Rules.

Alderman Curran moved the adoption of said ordinance.

The President, then in the chair, put the question whether the Board would agree to accept said report and adopt said ordinance.

Which was unanimously decided in the affirmative by the following vote:

AFFIRMATIVE—ALDERMEN

Bartscherer	Duggan	Mullen (Frank)
Bedell	Dujat	Mullen (Jas. F.)
Benninger	Ferguson	Nugent
Boschen	Ferrand	O'Rourke
Bosse	Eagan	Ottes
Brush	Fink	Pendry
Burden	Gaynor	Post
Burns	Hannon	Pouker
Carberry	Hogan	Quinn
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Chorosh	Kenneally	Robitzek
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Colne	Kochendorfer	Schmelzel
Cunningham	Lein	Schweickert
Curran	Levy	Squiers
Delaney	McCourt	Stapleton
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Dixson	McNally	Taylor
Donnelly	Milligan	Trau
Dostal	Molen	Weil
Dotzler	Moore (Chas. J.)	Wendel
Dowling	Moore (Jesse D.)	Wilmot

and President Connolly, President Mathewson, by John G. Borgstede, Commissioner of Public Works; President Pounds, by Edmund W. Voorhies, Commissioner of Public Works; President Marks; the Vice-Chairman; the President—72.

Report of the Committee on Rules in favor of revising the Ordinances approved on April 6, 1915, re-establishing the Corporate Seal of The City of New York and establishing an Official City Flag.

April 27, 1915

The Committee on Rules, to which was referred on April 13, 1915 (Minutes, page 147), An Ordinance amending an Ordinance relating to the adoption of an official flag by The City of New York, approved April 6, 1915, respectfully

REPORTS:

The ordinances providing for the adoption of an official flag by The City of New York and the re-establishment of the original corporate seal of the

City which were adopted by the Board of Aldermen on March 23, 1915, and approved by the Mayor on April 6, 1915, have received almost universal commendations from the press and from the organizations and individuals particularly interested, and the designs so adopted have been generally accepted with strong expressions of approval.

Certain typographical errors which have been discovered in the printing of the ordinances render it necessary that these errors should be corrected, and it has been suggested that several slight changes be made in the wording. Attention has been called to the fact that, owing to the change of the calendar from the old style to the new style, the date June 12th, old style, is now June 24th under the new style.

It has also been suggested that when the design for the seal is used on the City flag or for architectural or ornamental purposes, the legend "Sigillum Civitatis Novi Eboraci," is superfluous and detracts from the design, and might therefore well be omitted. The proposed changes involve no material alteration in the design of the flag and seal as previously recommended and adopted, but,

in the opinion of your Committee, are desirable.

Your Committee therefore recommend the adoption of the following substitute ordinances.

Henry H. Curran, Frank J. Dotzler, John Diemer, F. H. Wilmot, O. Grant Esterbrook, Frank L. Dowling, C. Augustus Post, Committee on Rules.

Then follow the proposed ordinances which were adopted in the form of an amendment to Chapter I, Article 2, of the Code of Ordinances of The City of New York, as printed in Chapter VII.

VII

CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

CHAPTER I. ARTICLE 2.

§ 2. **City Seal.** a. Description. The corporate seal of The City of New York, as adopted by the common council on July 24, 1686, with the alteration adopted by the common council on March 16, 1784, is hereby re-established, and the following device is hereby adopted as the device of said seal, to wit:

Arms: Upon a shield, saltire-wise, the sails of a windmill. Between the sails, in chief a beaver, in base a beaver, and on each flank a flour barrel;

Supporters: Dexter, a sailor, his right arm bent, and holding in his right hand a plummet;

his left arm bent, his left hand resting on the top of the shield; above his right shoulder a cross-staff. Sinister, an Indian of Manhattan, his right arm bent, his right hand resting on the top of the shield, his left hand holding the upper end of a bow, the lower end of which rests on the ground. Shield and supporters resting upon a horizontal laurel branch;

Date: Beneath the horizontal laurel branch the date 1664, being the year of the capture of New Amsterdam by the English and the first use of the name of the City of New York;

Crest: Upon a hemisphere, an American eagle with wings displayed;

Legend: Upon a ribbon encircling the lower half of the design the words "Sigillum Civitatis Novi Eboraci";

The whole encircled by a laurel wreath.

b. Design. The following design is hereby adopted as the official and standard design of such corporate seal:

c. Execution and custody of. The city clerk shall cause to be executed and cast in bronze a model of the foregoing design as the standard corporate seal of the city and shall keep the same in his custody. The city clerk shall also cause the said design to be engraved in accurate conformity therewith upon metal as the seal of the city and shall keep and affix the same, as provided in §31 of the charter; and he shall also provide in the same manner for all other officers of the city who are required or authorized by law to have or use the corporate seal of the city.

d. Date of effect and use of. On and after June 24, 1915, the said seal shall be used for all requisite purposes and all representations of the seal of the city impressed or printed on and after said date on documents, publications or stationery issued or used by or in the name or under the authority of the city or of any borough or department thereof, or carved, or otherwise represented on buildings or structures owned by the city; or otherwise officially portrayed shall be in exact conformity with the aforesaid standard design without alteration or addition, except that the legend "Sigillum Civitatis Novi Eboraci" may be omitted when the design is used on the city flag or for architectural or ornamental purposes. The seals now in use by the city clerk and by any other city officers shall be defaced and cancelled on said date by the city clerk and shall remain in his custody.

§ 3. **Official City Flag.** The following design is hereby adopted as the design of the official flag of the city and as a substitute for the flag now in use, to wit:

A flag combining the colors orange, white and blue, arranged in perpendicular bars of equal

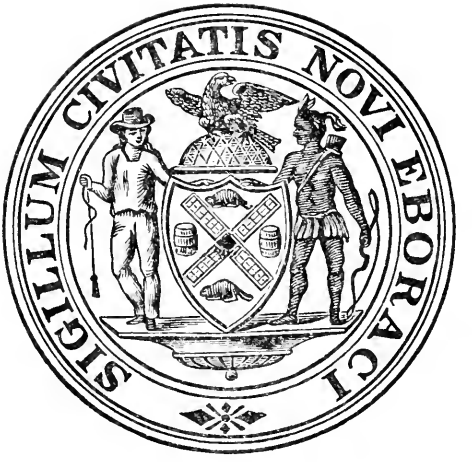
dimensions (the blue being nearest to the flagstaff) with the standard design of the seal of the city in blue upon the middle, or white bar, omitting the legend "Sigillum Civitatis Novi Eboraci," which said colors shall be the same as those of the flag of the United Netherlands in use in the year 1626.

§ 4. **Mayor's Flag.** The official flag of the mayor shall be the same in design as the official flag of the city, except that upon the middle or white bar there shall be above the design of the seal in a semi-circle, five blue five-pointed stars, typifying the five boroughs of the city; the dimensions of such flag shall be thirty-three inches by forty-four inches.

§ 5. **Flags and decorations on City Hall.** All power and authority to display flags or other decorations on, in or about the City Hall, or other public buildings within the City Hall park, is hereby vested in the mayor, unless otherwise ordered by the board of aldermen, by a vote of a majority of all the members elected to the board.

Adopted by the Board of Aldermen, April 27, 1915.

Approved by the Mayor, May 1, 1915.



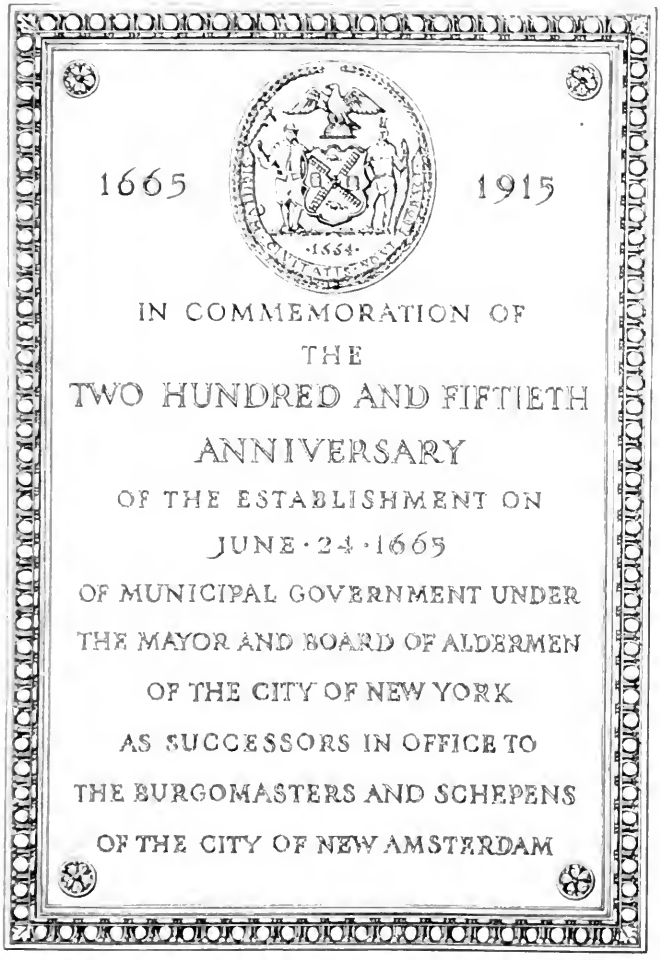
The Seal of The City of New York
Cancelled by Ordinance on
June 24, 1915

ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

Appointed by the Mayor

George McAneny, *Chairman*
Mrs. Robert Abbe
John Quincy Adams
Cyrus Adler
Louis Annin Ames
Frank L. Babbott
Willard Bartlett
Howard R. Bayne
Daniel M. Bedell
Gerard Beekman
Henry L. Bogert
George C. Boldt
Reginald Pelham Bolton
John H. Boschen
Robert H. Bosse
Elmer E. Brown
Arnold W. Brunner
William D. Brush
George W. Burleigh
Howard Russell Butler
Nicholas Murray Butler
Beverly Chew
Joseph H. Choate
Thomas W. Churchill
Theodore W. Compton
Maurice E. Connolly
Robert Grier Cooke
Mrs. Maria Duane Bleecker Cox
Henry H. Curran
Gherardi Davis
Vernon M. Davis
Robert W. de Forest
John Diemer
Frank L. Dowling
William Duggan
Edward Eichhorn
O. Grant Esterbrook
John S. Gaynor
Cass Gilbert
Edward Hagaman Hall
R. T. H. Halsey
James Hamilton
A. Augustus Healy
Mrs. A. Barton Hepburn
Charles G. Hine
Oscar Igstaedter

Henry P. Johnston
William A. Johnston
Francis C. Jones
Robert D. Kohn
George F. Kunz
Henry M. Leipziger
Goodhue Livingston
Seth Low
Charles J. McCormack
St. Clair McKelway
Mrs. James Allen Macdonald
Marcus M. Marks
Douglas Mathewson
Richard W. Meade
Sidney E. Mezes
Adolph S. Ochs
Victor Hugo Paltsits
William H. Pendry
John B. Pine
Hyman Pouker
Lewis H. Pounds
Frederic B. Pratt
Ralph E. Prime
Ralph Pulitzer
Leo L. Redding
William C. Reick
Ogden M. Reid
Philip Rhinelander
T. J. Oakley Rhinelander
Herman Ridder
Elihu Root
Theodore Rousseau
Henry W. Sackett
Mrs. Russell Sage
Arthur F. Schermerhorn
F. Augustus Schermerhorn
Miss Louisa Lee Schuyler
Patrick J. Scully
Frederick H. Stevenson
Edward W. Stitt
I. N. Phelps Stokes
Mrs. William C. Story
Charles W. Stoughton
Charles H. Strong
Mrs. Edward N. Townsend, Jr.
Guy Van Amringe
Mrs. Schuyler Van Rensselaer
Cabot Ward
Harry W. Watrous
Jacob A. Weil
Alfred T. White
William G. Willcox



Bronze Tablet in the City Hall

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

George F. Kunz, *Chairman*
George W. Burleigh, *Secretary*
Richard W. Meade, *Treasurer*

John Quincy Adams
Frank L. Babbott
Reginald Pelham Bolton
Henry H. Curran
Gherardi Davis
Frank L. Dowling
Edward Hagaman Hall
Francis C. Jones
Henry M. Leipziger
Victor Hugo Paltsits
John B. Pine
Henry W. Sackett
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